

CLAIMS:

1. A method of counteracting copying of digital information, the method comprising the steps of:
 - (a) providing a system (10) comprising at least one content provider (40), at least one consumer having one or more devices (50) for replaying digital information, first distributing means (30) for distributing authorized copies of said digital information from said at least one content provider (40) to said at least one consumer, and second distributing means (20) susceptible to distributing unauthorized copies of said digital information from said at least one content provider (40) to said at least one consumer;
 - (b) arranging for said at least one content provider (40) to be susceptible to providing authorized copies of said digital information to said at least one customer via the first distributing means (30);
 - (c) arranging for distribution via the second distributing means of copies of said digital information from said at least one content provider (40) wherein at least a portion of said digital information is watermarked; and
 - (d) arranging for said one or more devices (50) to include watermark detecting means (65, 70) operable to identify the digital information presented thereto which has been watermarked, said detecting means (65, 70) being susceptible to hindering replay of the digital information which is watermarked.
2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the authorized copies of said digital information are substantially devoid of watermarks detectable to the detector (65, 70).
3. A method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the portion of the digital information which is watermarked is covertly watermarked.
4. A method according to claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the watermark detecting means (65, 70) is a legislated requirement for said one or more devices (50).

5. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the second distributing means (20) includes the Darknet (20).
6. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the first distributing means (30) comprises at least one of: at least part of the Internet, stores/retailers, postal delivery services and library facilities.
7. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the authorized copies of said digital information are conveyed on physical data carriers.
8. A method according to claim 7, wherein the data carriers are at least one of CD's and DVD's.
9. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein more than 20% of the digital information provided from said at least one content provider (40) for distribution via the second distributing means (20) is subject to watermarking.
10. A method according to claim 9, wherein more than 50% of the digital information provided from said at least one content provider (40) for distribution via the second distributing means (20) is subject to watermarking.
11. A method according to claim 9 or 10, wherein more than 80% of the digital information provided from said at least one content provider (40) for distribution via the second distributing means (20) is subject to watermarking.
12. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the one or more devices (50) are randomly operable to hinder replay of digital information received thereat when said digital information is at least partially watermarked.
13. A system (10) for counteracting copying of digital information, the system (10) comprising:
(a) at least one content provider (40);
(b) at least one consumer having one or more devices (50) for replaying digital information;

(c) first distributing means (30) for distributing authorized copies of said digital information from said at least one content provider (40) to said at least one consumer; and

5 (d) second distributing means (20) susceptible to distributing copies of said digital information from said at least one content provider (40) to said at least one consumer, the system (10) being arranged such that:

(e) said at least one content provider (40) is susceptible to providing authorized copies of said digital information to said at least one customer via the first distributing means (30);

10 (f) said second distributing means (20) is susceptible to distributing copies of said digital information wherein at least a portion of said digital information distributed by the second distributing means (20) is watermarked; and

(g) said one or more devices (50) include watermark detecting means (65, 70) operable to identify the digital information presented thereto which has been watermarked, 15 said detecting means (65, 70) being susceptible to hindering replay of the digital information which is watermarked.

14. A system (10) according to claim 13, wherein the authorized copies of said digital information are substantially devoid of watermarks detectable to the detector (65, 70). 20

15. A system (10) according to claim 13 or 14, wherein the portion of the digital information which is watermarked is covertly watermarked.

16. A system (10) according to claim 13, 14 or 15, wherein the watermark 25 detecting means (65, 70) is a legislated requirement for said one or more devices (50).

17. A system (10) according to any one of claims 13 to 16, wherein the second distributing means (20) includes the Darknet (20).

30 18. A system (10) according to any one of claims 13 to 17, wherein the first distributing means (30) comprises at least one of: at least part of the Internet, stores/retailers, postal delivery services and library facilities.

19. A system (10) according to any one of claims 13 to 18, wherein the authorized copies of said digital information are conveyed on physical data carriers.

20. A system (10) according to claim 19, wherein the data carriers are at least one
5 of CD's and DVD's.

21. A system (10) according to any one of claims 13 to 20, wherein more than 20% of the digital information provided from said at least one content provider (40) is subject to watermarking.

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22. A system (10) according to claim 21, wherein more than 50% of the digital information provided from said at least one content provider (40) for distribution via the second distributing means (20) is subject to watermarking.

15 23. A system (10) according to claims 21 or 22, wherein more than 80% of the digital information provided from said at least one content provider (40) for distribution via the second distributing means (20) is subject to watermarking.

20 24. A system (10) according to any one of claims 13 to 23, wherein the one or more devices (50) are randomly operable to hinder replay of digital information received thereat when said digital information is at least partially watermarked.